

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-11 /077 W
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R 011410Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8593
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 0299

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINR, MI

SUBJ: APPARENT INCREASED CONCERN REGARDING SUBVERSION ON PART
PRESIDENT BANDA

1. BEGINNING LAST NOVEMBER SHORTLY FOLLOWING THE DEATH
IN LOS ANGELES OF PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE, PROFESSOR CHIPEMBERE,
PRES BANDA CHOSE EXILE KANYAMA CHIUME TO TAKE HIS PLACE AND
COMPOSED AN ANTI-SUBVERSION THEME AROUND HIM WHICH IS NOW FULLY
ORCHESTRATED AND DAILY RENDERED FORTE THROUGH ALL MEDIA. AS
ACCOMPANIMENT THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY PROCESSION OF POLITICAL
DETENTIONS AND A GROWING ATMOSPHERE OF FEAR AND CONCERN AMONG
EDUCATED MALAWIANS AND FOREIGNERS LIVING IN THE COUNTRY. HARDEST
HIT HAVE BEEN THE MALAWI CIVIL SERVANTS. FOR EXAMPLE, SEVERAL
TEACHERS FROM THE UNIVERISTY HAVE BEEN SEIZED AND LAST WEEK 14
EMPLOYEES AT THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE WERE TAKEN AT ONE
FELL SWOOP. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, A SPECIAL BULLETIN IN THE
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DAILY PAPER ANNOUNCED THE DISMISSAL FROM OFFICE AND EXPULSION FROM

THE MALAWI CONGRESS PART OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, RICHARD BANDA, WHOSE BROTHER GEORGE IS MINISTER COUNSELOR IN WASHINGTON. THE ONLY REASON GIVEN WAS "FOR VIOLATION OF ONE OF THE 4 CORNER-STONES" I.E. UNITY, LOYALTY, OBEDIENCE AND DISCIPLINE. EARLIER A SIMILAR BULLETIN ANNOUNCED THE EXPULSION FROM THE PARTY OF FORMER SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT AND EARLY PARTICIPANT IN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, ALEC NYASULU. LAST WEEK CAME WORD THAT ALL GOVT EMPLOYEES INCLUDING EXPATRIATES (FOREIGNERS) HAVE BEEN TOLD NOT TO TALK OR MEET SOCIALLY WITH MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS.

2. COMMENT: THE MOTIVATION FOR THE CURRENT ANTI-SUBVERSION CAMPAIGN IS THE SUBJECT OF SPECULATION IN EXPATRIATE AND DIPLOMATIC QUARTERS. RECENTLY AMONG OTHERS I HAVE TALKED WITH THE BRITISH, INDIAN AND ZAMBIAN HIGH COMMISSIONERS AND THE WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR. ALL OF US ARE EQUALLY PUZZLED FOR THERE IS ONLY THE SLIMEST EVIDENCE ADDUCED BY THE GOM AND THAT BORDERING ON THE ORWELLIAN ABSURD. FOR EXAMPLE, CHIRUNDU CLOTH ALLEGEDLY INTRODUCED INTO MALAWI BY CHIUME WHICH BEARS THE PICTURE OF A WOMAN WITH A PLAITED COIFFEUR RATHER THAN A LIKENESS OF DR. BANDA, ANOTHER LOT WITH THE SLOGAN "HANG TEN" IMPRINTED THEREON, APPARENTLY A LOT OF MATERIAL LEFT OVER FROM THE HEY DAY OF THE SURFING CROWD, LETTERS FROM A SOLITARY MALAWIAN STUDENT AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY (OHIO) ALLEGEDLY FORMENTING INSURRECTION, A REPORTED UNDERGROUND CHIUME PUBLICATION WHICH WAS SEIZED IN A WOT SENT TO THE UNIVERSITY BY MAIL. AT LEAST TWO OF THE DETAINED PROFESSORS ARE HELD ONLY FOR HAVING ANSWERED A LETTER FROM THE ABOVE-MENTIONED STUDENT AS NEARLY AS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ASCERTAIN.

3. AS CONJECTURES WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING EXPLANATIONS:

(1) BANDA ACTUALLY BELIEVES THERE IS A SUBVERSIVE THREAT AND PURSUES ALL CLUES WITH A VIGOR STIMULATED BY A GROWING SENILE PARANOIA COMBINING DELUSIONS OF PERSECUTION AND GRANDEUR. HIS SUBORDINATES AROUND HIM NEVER DARE EVEN HINT AT A CONTRADICTION AND DESPERATELY SEEK EVIDENCE TO SATISFY THIS CONVICTION.

(2) BANDA KNOWS BETTER BUT IS USING THIS DEVICE TO SOLIDIFY HIS ABSOLUTE AND TOTAL CONTROL. A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF THE DETAINEES COME FROM THE RUMPHI AREA WHERE CHIUME LIVED.
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(3) PEOPLE AROUND BANDA AND PARTICULARLY THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECY GENERAL OF THE MCP, MUWALO, HAVE DELIBERATELY PLANTED THIS ERRONEOUS BELIEF IN BANDA'S MIND IN ORDER TO GET RID OF PARTY RIVALS AND POTENTIAL OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE, AND LINE UP A "SUCCESSION" WITH "SOUTHERNERS" SOLIDLY IN CONTROL.

I AM PRESENTLY INCLINED TO THE FIRST EXPLANATION BUT SOLID EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF ANY OF THE THREE IS YET TO BE DEVELOPED. MALAWIANS WHO MIGHT KNOW ARE EARLY AVOIDING US. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT SOMEONE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER AN ATTEMPT AT A FRANK DISCUSSION OF THE SITUATION WITH THE MINISTER GEORGE BANDA AT AN EARLY DATE. WE WOULD GUESS THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY OF HIS EARLY RECALL IN THE LIGHT OF HIS BROTHER'S FALL FROM GRACE.
STEVENSON

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NNN

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